The Abduction of Broken Things

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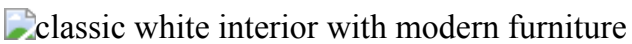
The Abduction of Broken Things

by TigerPrawn

Summary

Lee discovers that death is not the end. And whilst he adjusts well to his new chance at life, fellow abductee, Draco, does not.



Lee gasped in a breath, filling his lungs. They stung, they hurt so viscerally that he screamed. Though the sound he produced was raw and broken.

And then he was breathing normally and opened his eyes.

He was in his apartment. There was no light coming in from outside and Cathy was gone. He was there alone in bed. And he… felt okay.

He swallowed. The pain in his throat and lungs easing with every breath. And he felt warmer. Warmer than he had in awhile. Lee patted himself down, trying to understand what was happening, and felt flesh on his bones that hadn't been there in a really long time.

Lee blinked and clenched his jaw, felt the anguish in his chest as he tried to make sense of it.

He didn't feel sick. For the first time in years, he didn't feel sick.

Lee swung his legs from his bed and took a moment to rest them on the floor, still feeling a little weak. When he pushed up onto his feet he staggered slightly, but was able to hold his weight, able to right himself.

He hadn't been able to do that in a while either. Not the last few weeks before…

Lee drew in a quick and panicked breath.

He'd died.

Was he dead?

Everything was so quiet. Where was Cathy? She'd been sat there with him. At the end.

"Fuck," Lee muttered, his voice rough from disuse.

Whatever was happening here he wasn't okay with it. Something really fucked up was going on. Everything seemed normal, but nothing was quite right.

And that became all the more apparent as he staggered to the bathroom. His few possessions were in the right places, but a few were slightly wrong. Like they had been replaced by not quite exact copies.

His heart was already racing when he reached the bathroom and turned on the faucet. He splashed water on his face and then looked up into the mirror.

First, he saw his own face. Healthy, full. A version of himself he hadn't seen in longer than he could remember.

And then there was another face. Someone standing behind him in the doorway of the bathroom, reflected in the mirror and smiling at him gently.

It looked like… It was… Marilyn Monroe. Dressed down like in the photos he'd seen of her with that casual look, not all dolled up for a movie. But still, undeniably her.

"What the fuck?" Lee snapped out the words in shock and spun to face her, expecting her not to be there. Expecting it to be a dream or a hallucination.

But there she stood, Marilyn Monroe, perhaps a little older than she was when she had died. Which was a weird thought to acknowledge. She held out a hand to him, which he stared at in confusion.

"Hi there, Lee. From the look you're giving me, I guess you know who I am. You can call be Norma Jeane, sugar."

Lee blinked. He pinched his arm and it hurt.

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"Lee, how are you?"

Lee looked up at one of *them*, the one that was called Hio. They had the musical lilt to their voice that they all did. It had taken a little while to get used to the way they looked, human but not quite, slightly the wrong shape, too tall for their width.

Hio approached as Lee sat at one of the little outdoor tables in one of the garden areas. It was still inside of course, on the ship or whatever it was they were on, but if he looked up, he could swear it was the sky.

Lee still wasn't sure from his surroundings, what exactly the truth was, and every time he asked the question was politely dismissed.

Was he dead? Were these aliens? Humans of the future? He wasn't sure. The place reminded him of a hospital, so clean and white. But it didn't have the horrible scent of sterile chemicals and death. After the last few years, the lack of these smells was actually a comfort.

Norma Jeane had explained some things to him, guided him those first few weeks. And when he asked questions that she didn't answer it was clear it was because she wouldn't rather than couldn't. It seemed the way of the place was for each person to find answers on their own.

His deep suspicion was, this wasn't any sort of afterlife.

This wasn't Heaven or Nirvana, or hell for that matter. Not one of the multitudes of afterlife he'd ever heard of.

After a few weeks he'd come to realise it didn't matter what or where this place was.

"I'm fine," Lee answered with a smile, sipping at the tea he'd poured from the pot sat in front of him. It was a tranquil place. He was starting to prefer the gardens to his own quarters, the replica of his apartment back home. He felt so out of place in it now.

Either way, he was safe and comfortable, and most importantly, not sick. They could have lured him into a lab and started using an anal probe on him to get scientific results and he'd have still been cool with it. It would have still been better than some of his chemo treatments, better than the last few weeks he'd been alive.

Alive the first time, he corrected himself mentally.

"We would like your help." Hio said, a friendly tone as they lowered into the seat opposite Lee.

"Oh?" Lee was taken aback. So far their conversations had all been pleasant and mostly focused on his health and how he was settling in. Over the months these had become less frequent, but he'd just assumed that was what Hio wanted to discuss - the fact that Lee largely kept to himself.

There were others there, Norma Jeane of course. And a mixture of people who had arrived the same time as him, the same time as her, and other times in between. A pleasant little community of humans and Hio's kind.

"You do not wish to?" Hio tried to read his reaction and fell a little short. They had a little confusion in their tone, but mostly concern. As though they might have insulted or upset Lee.

"Am I in a position to say no?" Lee joked, after all he might not be a prisoner, but he couldn't exactly go anywhere either. Norma Jeane had mentioned that they would be going somewhere, in that vague way everyone had around this place. A new home, if he wanted it.

"Of course," Hio replied, "You need not do anything you do not wish."

Lee chuckled, and shook his head. These people, or beings, whatever they were, oozed a sort of calm and peace and honesty that he had strived for towards the end. He enjoyed being around them.

"What can I do to help?"

"We have a new guest and he is not adjusting well. He comes from a much earlier time than you, the distance in years has a greater impact. We created an environment for him that should have been comfortable, but he became a danger to himself, so we have moved him to a basic room. This has made his adjustment worse. He could use support. A friend."

Lee nodded and took in the words, "Has this happened before?"

Hio shook their head, "Not to this degree. We have never taken anyone from so distant a time before. He presented a unique study. We will learn from this."

Lee interpreted the words to mean they would learn not to do this again, or to adjust.

This was how he learned things here, by listening and interpreting. They never hid anything, but they also never answered directly, information was imparted over time.

It was actually pretty fascinating to think about how they moved through time, or maybe they were outside of time?

Norma Jeane had told him that she had been there maybe five years or so, and was only about that from when she'd died, when by rights she should be in her nineties.

"Is there somewhere I should meet him? Or he can join me for tea?" Lee indicated his cooling cup.

"I'm afraid he hasn't been allowed freedom of the complex yet, for his own safety." Hio's tone was regretful, maybe even a little embarrassed, as though they hadn't done as good a job as they should.

Norma Jeane had told him her own experiences, she had been a wreck at first, thinking that someone had given her some sort of cocktail of drugs or that she'd gone mad. Everyone reacted differently, even to this serene environment.

Others that she had helped, as she helped Lee, as Lee was now being asked to, she had spoken little of. It was private information, only to be imparted by those involved, it would seem. Another part of the strangely polite culture here, one that was respectful but completely unspoken. It was just how everyone was, and so everyone followed that expectation. Again, Lee found it suited him quite well.

He had been, Norma assured him, pretty easy in comparison to herself and many others. Once he had accepted the fact that he was in fact alive again, he had settled very quickly and incredibly well. Taking one day at a time on trust, before even feeling that the trust was reasonable. Which it most certainly seemed to be.

The least he could do was help someone else adjust.

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Draco woke with a scream.

It filled the room and echoed around him like nothing he'd ever experienced before. It was not how sound resonated in a house of his experience. The echo made his scream seem wholly inhuman and he had to wonder where in the underworld he had been deposited.

This was like nothing he had imagined, and far from the journey he had taken on the Styx with Perseus.That had been dark and dank, cold seeping into their bones. This place was bright and warm. So bright that he was still struggling to adjust to it. Brighter than his eyes had ever known, even on the sunniest summer's day. Nothing was ever this white.

This place was quite inhuman.

That much had been clear when he had first awoken here, by his count, twelve days prior. He had awoken in a poor imitation of his home, everything not quite right. And the sound, that most of all was wrong. There were none of the sounds of nature outside, only the strange and unnatural echo.

He had been greeted by a strange person in strange clothes who spoke with an intonation that was confusing, though he understood the language. Understood it, but was sure that they were not actually speaking the same dialect, despite understanding each other. As though the gods had him understanding a language other than his own.

He had tried to explain that Draco was safe, that this wasn't the underworld. And yet, how could that be? Draco could remember very little, but he had a very strong sense that he was dead. That he *had* died. That much was instilled deeply within him, an undeniable truth, even if he couldn't remember the particulars.

When the man had been unable to give him further answers, Draco, unarmed as he was, had held him against the wall by the throat and yet he was unable to answer further.

He had let the man go and then pulled apart the dwelling around him. Indeed finding unnatural walls under the ones that had pretended to be his own. He had raged for what seemed like hours. And when he'd finally slept, he'd woken in a white room.

Draco had admitted defeat then, biding his time. Waiting in this horrific place for whatever fate these adversaries tried to inflict upon him.

He just wished, as the days went on, that he did not dream.

Every time he closed his eyes, he saw his daughter. Dead since her sixteenth birthday. A sacrifice taken by his enemies. He would have given his own life in her place had he been able.

And now, if this was not the underworld, he might never see her again. The thought was near unbearable.

He would dream he was near to her, almost able to reach her, but then he would shatter like a statue falling from a pedestal. And then he would wake.

Draco went to the room that adjoined his own, like some private baths, it had running hot water. At first he had taken baths only, but after a few days had been tempted to try the box that filled with warm rain. He found it soothing and a great ease for his muscles that ached from the unfamiliar bed.

He stood under the water, letting it run over his braid and down his body for as long as pleased him. Eventually Draco turned the water off and stepped out. It was not his custom to use a towel, at home for much of the year it was warm enough to dry in the sun. But as he was indoors, he picked one up and began to pat dry his hair as he walked back into his main quarters.

The young man and he met each other's eyes at the same time. The other man's were wide as his were narrowed.

"Shit, sorry," The man gave a friendly smile, "There was no answer when I knocked so I let myself in." Again the language was clearly not his own and yet Draco understood him completely.

Though he found he couldn't answer. It was such a shock to him to be treated with such little respect, a man of his stature. Nothing made him feel more alien in this place than the lack of courtesy he should be shown.

"I'm Lee," The stranger offered, filling the silence as he held out his arm to be grasped in greeting. Draco looked at it, not taking hold of it as he lowered the towel from his hair and wrapped it around his waist.

Lee cleared his throat.

"Forgive the intrusion, sir. Our hosts asked that I come help you settle in. Would you like to go for a walk? They wanted me to let you know you can leave your quarters now, if you remain calm."

Draco said nothing for a moment, only looking the stranger over and wondering what new game this was.

"I'd prefer to go home." He replied gruffly.

"Ah, yeah that's not possible, I'm afraid." There was sympathy in the man's tone.

"That is not acceptable," Draco menaced, lowering his voice slightly. Even without a weapon he found his body easing into a fighting stance, prepared, should that be an outcome.

Lee shrugged, his expression now one of pity. "There's not really anything I can do about it."

"Then bring me to your masters and I will impress the point upon them." He meant every word, though knew they would be stronger if he held a sword.

"Look, I know it's hard-" The man stepped forward and rested his hand gently on Draco's bare shoulder. It was not the camaraderie of his fellow soldiers, it was the comfort he'd only before taken from a woman.

Draco flinched and shrugged off the touch, cutting off the man's words, "If you cannot help me you are useless to me."

Draco turned from the man, presenting his back and making it clear that the discussion with this intruder, had come to an end.

"I'll come back another time." The man replied and then he heard the door open and close.

Draco breathed a sigh of relief. The intrusion had not been welcome. And neither had the comfort, as much as he had found he had wanted to accept it in this strange and unnatural place.

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Day after day the man, Lee, came to his quarters and asked whether he wished to go for a walk, or talk. Or do some other activity with this complete stranger who appeared to have nothing that might interest him other than his pretty face.

Because that was undeniable. He was handsome in the way that younger men were, the kind of men he had spent carnal times with before when he was younger himself. It was only natural after all, especially amongst soldiers, who might go a long year without the company of a woman.

Draco would admit that he had taken comfort in many a soldier's bed when word of his wife's death had reached him. Scarcely a year after the death of their daughter. Whilst he had been saddened, their match had been one of requirement - a good family match. And whilst he had been fond of her, she was not someone he mourned as a partner, only as a lover and the mother of his child. His daughter on the other hand, his own flesh and blood? He had sought much comfort after her death too, and wasn't ashamed of it.

Yes, under the right circumstances, this man had a face that might pull him to bed.

But in this situation, this strange place. How could he be sure of anything? Whoever had him trapped here might even have that as a plan. A seduction so that he would lower his defences. Because he certainly wasn't blind to the way the man had looked at him the day they had first met. As he had stood naked and wet from the rain box. There had been desire in his eyes and flush on his cheeks, that a skilled manipulator could easily fake. And the timing of his visit was suspect, when considered in such a way.

And yet, Draco couldn't find it in him to turn the man away entirely. He still allowed him to come by, still allowed him a few minutes audience to try and convince him to spend time together. He could have simply told him never to return and refused him entry, but he didn't.

It was a hard thing to admit, but Draco needed the company, and to have someone visit him in this manner had quickly become routine. And a welcome one.

"Coffee?"

Lee stood holding two white drinking vessels in his hand when Draco opened the door to him.

For weeks now he had persisted on visiting, but this was a new development.

"Coffee?" Draco repeated. The word seemed familiar enough, something he had heard of from beyond the Aegean, he was sure.

The rich smell that started to drift into his room, made him curious. It wasn't like anything he'd ever smelled before.

"It's a… a hot beverage. People from my time drink it quite a bit." Lee told him.

"Your time?" Draco asked, a little unfocused as his eyes landed on the cup and the rising steam piqued his curiosity.

"Yes, well. That would all be a lot easier to explain if you actually allowed me to explain it."

"I've told you before-"

"Yes, I know. If it doesn't help you get home then you don't care to know about it," Where others might sound exasperated, Lee let out a light laugh, a gentle smile. Like he was certain Draco would one day change his mind and was willing to wait.

Draco simply frowned.

"At least let me come in, have the coffee. You might like it," Lee encouraged.

Draco had to admit the the smell was making his mouth water. And whilst he was still cautious that this was all some sort of deception, it was becoming harder to resist the things offered to him. He accepted only basic sustenance from the people who hosted them here, and otherwise Lee was his only company. The one he was meant to trust.

And again, perhaps that was their plan?

Lee, maybe realising his hesitation, held one of the cups to his own mouth and sipped. A pleasing expression spread across his face and Draco wondered how pleasurable the experience must be.

Lee looked at him with a gentle grin, before asking "Would you like this one?" He held out the cup he drank from. "Just in case?"

Amusement flickered across Lee's expression and whilst Draco wished to remain deadly serious he couldn't help but find amusement in it too. He huffed a low laugh, but took that cup from Lee all the same, before stepping aside and allowing him to enter. Which Lee did, with a chuckle.

They settled at the small table by the window and Lee started to drink his remaining cup whilst Draco still considered his.

It was hot, boiling hot. Steam billowed up around him as he looked at the black liquid. It looked like tar, but it smelled like rich earth, nuts, and cocoa.

"I have mine black, if you want milk or cream, or sugar, just say." Lee ventured, an encouraging tone as he waited patiently for Draco to try it.

He watched as Lee blew on his cup, sending steam across the table to him, before taking another sip. Draco looked back down and lifted his cup, doing the same before raising it to his lips and taking a gulp.

It burned. His lips and tongue were a little scalded by the excessive and unnatural heat. He coughed and sputtered as he was forced to swallow the liquid or spit it out. It went down hot, and he did not really get a taste of the flavour until he had swallowed. It was there on the back of his tongue, still feeling the thickness of the liquid.

He recovered himself and looked at Lee, who looked startled and apologetic.

"It's hot, by the way. Maybe just sip at it until it cools a bit."

"It's bitter." Draco replied bluntly. He lifted the cup and this time sipped, taking in the flavour as he did so. The new flavours exploded on his tongue,

He must have been making faces as Lee was smiling at him as he watched intently.

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Lee had been taking coffee to Draco every morning for a couple of weeks and that had been going well. It helped that he seemed to have found something the man liked, and apparently they had built up some trust. After the fourth day Draco had even taken the cup without waiting for Lee to sip and prove it wasn't poisoned, or whatever fate he feared would befall him.

It was understandable. Draco still said very little, but enough for Lee to deduce he had been some sort of military man. He was sure to be onguard in this place, so different to what he was used to.

Like all of them, Draco wore the white and grey clothes that were provided to them, though he seemed to prefer a tunic, leaving his tanned and muscular legs on show. Not that Lee was complaining. But again, it built up a picture of someone very much out of time. He had been told as much, but Lee was started to realise that Draco was ancient. Literally.

It was one of the reasons that Lee didn't want to push him. Norma Jeane had been much more encouraging of Lee, and of course it had helped that Lee recognised her. Draco didn't have a frame of reference at all. Lee remembered what it was like to be completely out of it on meds and not knowing whether he was coming or going, he imagined it might be a bit like that. He wouldn't wish such disorientation on anyone.

And as grumpy as Draco came across, Lee found himself growing fond of their short time together each day.

So much so, that he decided to extend the pleasantries to an evening.

Lee knocked gently, two tumblers and a carafe of wine in his hands.

“What is this?” Draco asked with a raised brow, though his tone wasn’t as gruff as it often was.

“Wine. I’m sure you’ve had wine before.” Lee gave him his cockiest smile and received only a further raising of the brow. “Come on,” Lee encouraged and gently pushed past Draco and into the room.

He set the glasses down on the table and started to pour them out, noting Draco close the door behind him.

“Now, I’m something of an expert, believe it or not. And this is an incredibly good vintage that I was able to rustle up with the assistance of my friend Norma Jeane. It must be savoured, understood?” Lee couldn’t help the gentle flirtation in his tone, that had been

increasing over the weeks. He enjoyed it immensely, and so far Draco hadn't been unreceptive. He hadn't quite flirted back, but he hadn't seemed to mind the blatant attention.

And, if he was being honest with himself, Lee perhaps thought to bring wine so that Draco might loosen up a little. Enough to give away whether there was an interest there or not. After all, they had their new lives ahead of them, Lee hadn't been laid in a while, and Draco could certainly do with some sort of relief, he was sure.

Aside from which, he was becoming quite fond of the grumpy, stoic man.

He turned and gave Draco a charming smile as he handed out a glass to him.

Draco took it and immediately started to gulp the wine down.

"No, wait!" Lee was, rightly, horrified. But Draco stopped, looking with great scrutiny at the now barely filled glass in his hand, as though Lee had finally poisoned him.

"What have you done?" Draco growled, menacing and huffy in a way that made Lee's stomach flip.

Lee rolled his eyes and shook his head, "I said *savour*. You can't savour something you knock back like a damn shot. This wine is expensive you know!"

Or would have been, he thought. If he'd bought it back home, before he died.

Lee demonstrated by swirling his glass, taking in the aroma, sipping it and really tasting the flavour. It was actually even better than he'd hoped.

Once he had started sipping rather than gulping, Draco seemed to be enjoying the flavour too, enough that Lee was able to start a conversation about it as he moved to the sofa and took a seat.

He was aware of the way Draco eyed him for making himself at home. That said, he'd become very accustomed to the way Draco looked at him. The lingering looks on his ass especially, and Lee was definitely not complaining.

As nice as this place was, it was safe to say he had entered somewhat of a dry spell. Dying had literally killed his sex life. But not his sex drive. And he wasn't even going to try to deny that the feature star of his night time activities had become Draco. He imagined the many ways they could suck and fuck each other Draco's room. Even had the occasional fantasy that Draco actually left his room and sought him out in the night.

But he tried to keep a lid on these things. Hio had asked him to look out for Draco as Norma Jeane had looked out for him and he didn't want to let either of them down by fucking shit up because he couldn't keep it in his pants. Regardless of how long he had now gone without a good dicking down.

With that in mind, however, Lee wasn't going to deny himself the pleasure of Draco's company, as much of that as the man wanted to offer. And right now that meant him picking up the carafe and bringing it over, joining Lee on the sofa. It wasn't small, there was room

enough between them, but it still wasn't quite a three seater. And Lee raised a brow when, another drink in and idle conversation and teasing later, Draco poured out another glass and moved forward to do so. When he put the carafe back down there was no space between them.

They continued to talk and laugh.

When there was a lull in the conversation, Lee found himself asking quietly, "Tell me more about yourself Draco. I feel like I still don't really know all that much."

Unexpectedly, Draco let out a hearty laugh at that and shook his head. "I must be a fool then, that I consider you know me a lot better than many I've known. Perhaps not my history, but certainly my character. I rarely was so at ease with those under my command. And certainly not with my superiors. With friends perhaps, but many of them were lost to war over the years." He turned to Lee and looked at him intently, "You know me well indeed."

Lee took a breath at that, at the intensity of the gaze and the words. And the truth in them, he realised. In that respect, he knew Draco well.

And Draco, in his cups, it turned out, could be quite amusing. He loosened up considerably and regaled Lee with stories of when he was a younger man. Lee, in return, told Draco about the clubs he used to visit. Draco looked confused, trying to picture what such a place might be like, but Lee didn't miss the colour in his cheeks nor the glaze on his eyes when Lee explained some of the finer details.

There was another lull, and Draco seemed to grow sombre.

“I was a soldier, I protected my King, his family. Hades asked for a sacrifice of the Princess, and I couldn't allow that. It would have been a stain on my honour. There was a quest, a demigod and...” Draco shook his head. “I don't recall much. It goes black.”

Lee nodded, “Yeah, apparently that happens, mine came back to me quickly. Yours might come back over time, might not.” Lee shrugged, though his tone was supportive.

Draco huffed out a deep sigh, letting out a rumble as he did so. “I can't pretend I understand any of this.”

“Neither did I. And… I guess it's more familiar to me than you.”

“I was told that you would help me, that you would understand my situation more than others might.” Draco said the words with curiosity, not quite making it a question.

“Yeah, I don't think they meant that I could make you understand the future. Or how and why we are here. I'm still not entirely sure myself. I guess, they match up people that are equally broken?” Lee's words grew quieter as he spoke them and then he forced a laugh, to try and demonstrate how ridiculous it all was.

“I guess they think I can reach you,” Lee continued, looking at Draco and holding his gaze. It had quickly become clear that Draco was not a man who was ever going to turn away from a

staring contest.

Draco swallowed, looking thoughtful but still not looking away.

“And why are you here? They must have taken us all for a reason. If this is not the afterlife, then the gods must have placed me here for some other reason. Perhaps it is a curse.” Draco was pretty menacing when he spoke, and Lee was a little sorry that he couldn’t give him more answers.

“I can’t tell you that. I mean, I literally can’t. I don’t know. I know why I’m here, I think. But… they give out information slowly and selectively. It isn’t so much about secrets as they have an odd way of communicating. It is both blunt and indirect at the same time in different ways. It actually takes a little getting used to. Then you can find out a lot more.”

“Once you were accustomed to them, they revealed their plans to you?” Draco asked for clarity.

“Um, no. Not as straightforward as that. Once I accepted I was alive again, that this wasn’t a dream or something, I was allowed to wander more. Talk with people more, including the people who took us. They… don’t really understand direct questions, but if you pay attention they say a lot.”

“And in this way you found out why they wanted you here?” Draco eyed him, evaluating him with a slight sneer. “Sounds like a trick.”

Lee chuckled and shrugged, breaking the eye contact, though not in a dismissive way. A way he hoped communicated Draco hadn’t actually won that match.

“Maybe. Though, what I found out made sense. I died of cancer, they wanted to understand what cancer was. There are a few of us here who had different forms of it. Now they understand it. I even saw the lab, they studied the process of it, reversed it. That’s how I’m even here. To be here they have to cure you.”

Draco frowned at him, “So many of your words have no meaning. What is cancer? A plague?”

“Yeah, something like that.” Lee grinned, finding that he was free from the word now, and all it’s connotations and fears.

Draco grunted. “I don’t remember anything beyond the ferryman. Only fragments in my dreams and then they are gone again so quickly.”

“Right,” Lee nodded, as though he had a clue what the man was talking about. No wonder he was having such a hard time adjusting.

He was ancient, that much Lee had gleaned from their time together, probably lived thousands of years before. Not that it had any meaning now.

Lee let out a sigh and studied Draco's forlorn look. He seemed so out of place.

"You can trust me, you know? I know you were a military man and it must be second nature for you to believe all this to be a trick. But it's not. Or if it is they've tricked me too. I… I want to be your friend. I want to help you."

They gazed at each other for a long moment, and Lee thought that Draco might lean forward and-

"I want to be alone now," Draco said, standing and walking to the table, placing his glass down. Very clear that Lee had been dismissed.

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“What’s wrong, sugar?” Norma Jeane took a seat next to Lee on the marble bench in one of the little gardens. “You don’t usually look so sad these days.”

He forced a smile for her and she cocked a brow. She was right of course. He had settled quickly, yes. But there was no denying that the time he was spending with Draco had made him completely at home.

“It’s Draco. I just… I want to help him, but I don’t think I’m getting through to him.”

Norma Jeane sighed and placed a gentle hand on his thigh, gave it a squeeze.

“I understand. This is my third trip you know? Not including when they brought me back to life. They gave me the choice to keep travelling with them back and forth and keep helping people settle. And sometimes, it just takes time to work out. Or doesn’t at all. It’s easy to get invested.”

Lee took a halting breath at that. “And what happens if it doesn’t work out?”

She let out a little laugh, “Don’t go fretting. He’ll just be given a quiet little place, Draco, if he doesn’t settle. He’ll just be given what he needs and be allowed to live however suits him. They might even replicate his past environment if that makes him more comfortable. It’s the best they can do.”

Lee nodded, and her gentle smile showed that she noted his relief.

“You’ll get the choice too you know. No matter what Draco decides, you’ve done a good job with him. As good as anyone could. You could keep travelling back and forth if you wanted.” Norma Jeane’s tone was encouraging. “We’ll be there soon.”

“Why me? Why was I chosen to help him?” Lee sighed.

“He was broken into pieces, and so were you in some ways. You can understand each other. And… you suit each other on many levels.” She shrugged. “They always know the best people to help each other, sugar.”

Lee nodded, and swallowed. He wondered if the attraction he was starting to feel towards the man was obvious to her. She did a great job at acting dumb, but she was smart as a whip.

Norma Jeane stood and squeezed his shoulder before continuing her stroll around the gardens.

It was so beautiful in the gardens and it hurt him to think that Draco still would not leave his quarters, though he'd been allowed to do so for a while. He'd love to bring him here, it was so real. And, personally, he found it calming and tranquil.

Lee huffed out a deep breath and stood himself, making his way to Draco's quarters, but when he got there, there was no answer.

He was about to turn away when he decided to try the door. It opened and the room was dimly lit, the gentle sound of Draco snoring filled the place.

Lee considered for a moment that he should leave, but as he heard Draco whimper slightly, he found himself pulled to the bed. He wanted to comfort his friend, it hurt his heart to think of leaving.

"Shh," He hushed Draco quietly as he lay down next to him on the bed. Lee spooned against him, wrapping an arm around him until Draco stilled and settled back into sleep.

*

"Draco, you're dreaming."

"Wake up."

He recognised the voice, it echoed around the cavern he found himself in. The gorgon Medusa moved so quickly, he barely had time to anticipate her.

He was already dead, he knew. There was no saving him from the arrow in his chest. He had nothing to lose, and would have gladly acted the same even so. He had nothing to fear of death.

He remembered shattering.

Draco woke with a scream.

It was all so clear in his mind. His death.

"Draco, it's okay, you're okay." Kind words soothed him, hands roamed his clammy skin in an attempt to settle him.

He wasn't certain whether he was alive or dead, awake or dreaming. His entire body felt like it had been split apart. He could feel every join with searing pain, as though he had been stuck back together with molten metal.

"Draco."

The figure next to him took hold of his shoulders, a gentle shake as though to rouse him.

Was he still in the cavern? It was so dark. He mustn't look into her eyes.

No, he already had. He had felt his entire body die as it turned bit by bit to stone. And then he'd shattered.

"No!" Draco cried out, pushing the figure back.

He tried to rise from where he was, but something was around him. He looked down and sheets tangled around his lower half. Bed sheets or the tail of the gorgon?

Draco shook his head trying to clear the image.

"You're safe, I promise." The figure told him, this time pushing him onto his back and laying over him, pinning him there.

Draco roared, fighting back. He rolled them until the figure was under him and he could sit back and ball his fists, bring them down.

"Draco!" The pitch of Lee's voice gave away his fear. A dim light went on, Lee having reached for a side lamp, bringing reality into clear focus.

Draco blinked, shook his head, looked around. He was in this strange place still. In the room that was his, with the one person who had become his friend. The one person left in his life that he cared for. And he had been about to…

"Forgive me, forgive me." He muttered, lowering his face to press his forehead to Lee's shoulder even as he straddled the man.

"It's okay, you're okay." Lee reassured, his hands coming up into Draco's hair and stroking softly at the parts that had loosened from his braid. "You're okay." Lee repeated over and over as he began to press gentle, reassuring kisses to Draco's cheeks.

They were wet with tears, Draco then realised, which Lee was kissing away.

He pressed kisses all over his skin.

And finally, to his lips. And when he did, Draco opened to him and moaned into his mouth.

He was okay, he had Lee, holding him and keeping him safe. Guiding him in this strange land that was almost as strange for him. And yet he put Draco first, saw him through this.

The thought made him moan again, moving so that Lee could drag him down fully on top of him. Lee spread his legs and let Draco settle between them, his hardness immediately apparent.

Draco was fairing no better. And not just because he had been starved of this brand of affection for a while, but because he *wanted* Lee. He had not realised over the weeks that had passed, how much his acknowledgement of Lee's sweet countenance, had become desire.

He broke the kiss, pressing his forehead to Lee’s he wondered if he should apologise again, or if should ask, or say something. And yes, he found himself saying, “I want your thighs.”

Lee trembled beneath him, “Fuck, yes. Please. I want that too. I want you.”

Lee’s words pleased him and he let out a low rumble of appreciation.

"Don't hold back," Lee panted.

And Draco was grateful. Because he needed this, and Lee seemed to understand that. He needed to be hard and rough, to take. To have. Having been so helpless in this place, he needed to have control and possession over something.

Draco moved back, took rough hold of Lee and turned him over. He pulled down his coverings and ran a hand over his beautifully shaped ass. Lee's breath hitched as he moved forward a little, his own hard cock poking from under his tunic and rubbing precome at the back of Lee's thighs.

Draco stroked himself, spreading the sticky fluid, took away his hand, spat in it and then stroked himself a little more. He eased back his foreskin and let out a grunt of pleasure.

All the while Lee waited, still trembling with anticipation.

Draco moved further and used his knee to nudge Lee's legs a little further apart, until he was able to slide his cock into the warmth below Lee's testes. They both groaned, and Draco set his hands on Lee's thighs and pushed them closer again, trapping his cock between them.

He wasn't gentle.

Draco began fucking ruthlessly between Lee's thighs. He pressed himself as far over him as he could and took hold of Lee's hands, taking hold of them and pressing them to the bed, effectively restraining him.

"Oh god, oh god." Lee muttered, "You're, fuck… that feels so good."

Draco merely grunted, holding Lee down all the more and angling his thrusts to slide his cock against the base of Lee's own.

"Oh fuck, it's not enough…" Lee kept muttering over and over, that it wasn't enough, he wanted more.

"I have no oils, no-" Draco growled against him.

"I don't care. Please, please fuck me. I need you to-"

He didn't let Lee finish. He pulled back, spat in his hand again, stroked himself one more time and then pressed against Lee's entrance.

"Oh fuck!" Lee cried out.

The way gave easily for the tip, then there was a little resistance as Lee tried to relax but was battling against waves of pleasure that were mounting.

Draco pushed in a little more, and knew he could go no further without doing damage. He wanted to take Lee hard and rough, but he didn't want to hurt him.

Draco pulled out, leaving Lee to whimper at the loss for a moment. He drew a breath and then put his hands on Lee again, flipping the deceptively light man back over, and hitching his legs up over his shoulders.

Lee's face was slack with pleasure, his eyes a little glazed. He needed this as much as Draco, a resolution to what they had built between them.

Draco moistening his cock again, and then pressed forward. He pushed the head of his member into Lee, enjoying the look on his face. He couldn't recall ever being with someone so reactive before. Lee writhed and moaned, he reached his hands up for Draco.

With a grunt, Draco grabbed Lee's wrists and pushed them back down to the bed, pinning him there as he moved his hips. He slid back and forth, not enough to go deeper or to pull out, just teasing Lee's rim and grazing his prostate.

"Uhnn, so good." Lee groaned, going completely pliant under Draco's hands.

Draco sat back, leaving Lee motionless beneath him, and then took himself in hand. He pressed a little further in, and then began to roughly stroke his cock. Feeling Lee's body clench around him in a desire not to lose him, he jerked the rest of his length with his hand, imagining what it would be like to one day sink fully into that tight heat.

"Come inside me, oh god…" Lee pleaded. There was something so submissive about him, but a strength of will there too. Was he submitting or was he commanding Draco? Perhaps both.

Lee bit at his lower lip, his eyes closed in pleasure, as he began stroking his own hard length. He set a furious pace and it was clear from the way his inner muscles contracted, that he was already very close.

Even so, Lee's cry surprised both of them, as he spurted suddenly over his body. His entire body contracting around Draco as he increased his own strokes, resisting the urge just to bury himself inside Lee. With a grunt and a low groan, Draco's cock pulsed his hand. His balls drew tight and he could feel the seed flowing from him and filling Lee. He pushed a little forward into the wetness he created, pushing his seed only as deep as he dared without causing pain, before collapsing over Lee.

"Oh god, that was so good. I needed that. It's been a while." Lee chuckled against the side of Draco's neck.

Draco grunted as he shifted and his still half hard cock came away from Lee, followed by his thick come leaking between them.

They both struggled to catch their breath, but it slowly evened out. And despite the mess between them, Draco's eyelids grew heavy and very quickly they were both pulled back into a dreamless sleep.

*

Lee woke, barely able to breath. A heavy weight on top of him. It took a moment for him to realise that Draco held him. And it felt so good.

When he'd been sick, Lee had actively avoided this sort of intimacy. He hadn't wanted to get close to anyone whilst he was dying.

He felt the tears sting his eyes at the thought of it. The thought of having that closeness now if he allowed it. But it wasn't just up to him.

"Lee?" Draco shifted over him, blinking awake and looking down at him. "Lee…" His name reverent on the man's tongue. Draco moved his hand to Lee's face and wiped the tears away with his thumb.

"Did I hurt you?"

The concern on Draco's face made him ache and laugh, Lee shook his head.

"No. No, nothing like that. I just… I spoke to Norma Jeane before. Soon we're going to reach wherever it is they are taking us. Our new home or… She says I might be able to stay and help with others like I've tried to help you. And you…"

Lee let out a heavy breath with a shudder.

"I have not adjusted, to whatever it is I am supposed to adjust to." Draco replied gruffly, his tone a little regretful. "Our paths will go separate ways."

Lee shrugged, "Maybe. I'm not sure."

They fell silent and Draco moved from over him, slipping to his side and stroking a hand over Lee's chest as he contemplated.

"I want to understand, I want to stop resisting." Draco finally said, "But this is an unnatural thing. I have been robbed of my afterlife."

"Because you've been given a new one. And I understand that it's strange. It is to me too, but it is real and it's… another chance at… something. Just…" Lee shook his head and looked away.

Draco sighed heavily, and rested his head against Lee's chest.

"I want this to be real. I want to believe that you are what you say, and this place isn't just some strange trick."

Lee let out a shuddering breath and pushed Draco back to look at him, he took hold of Draco’s hand and moved it to his hip, Draco’s eyes following the motion.

"See this?" Lee ran Draco’s hand over the mole on his hip. "This is what made me sick. This was how the cancer started. They removed it, the mole, the cancer, but it wasn't enough and I died anyway. But the mole is back. When I woke up here it was like none of that had happened. It’s just a mole."

Lee swallowed as Draco's calloused fingers stroked over the mole and surrounding skin.

"When they brought me back, it wasn't the me who had just died, it was how I was born, I guess? I'm complete again, and you are too. They took your shattered body and put you back as you were before that. It’s real, and it’s another chance to live again."

Lee snaked a hand up to Draco’s face, stroking his beard and looking at him longingly.

“Please will you live again.”

Draco sighed heavily.

*

Draco knew that Lee would be there soon, with the coffee he had come to enjoy so much. Not least because he very much enjoyed watching Lee’s face when he took the first sip each morning.

He opened the door and stepped out into the bright, white corridor.

Draco looked both ways, unsure which direction to walk in, and whilst he decided two people passed him. One a human as he would know them, the other some human like creature that might be the work of the gods. They both greeted him pleasantly as they passed and he watched them go on their way.

“Draco?”

Lee’s voice called his attention back in the other direction. Lee stood there with the coffees in his hand, his eyes wide but his grin wider.

“I thought we could stroll in the garden you’ve told me about.” Draco said, and then cleared his throat, keeping a firm hold of his pride.

Lee smiled and nodded, handing him one of the cups. “This way,” He gestured with his head and began to walk back, Draco fell into step with him.

“This place, it’s as I imagine Mount Olympus must be. So white.”

Lee hummed his agreement, a smile on his face. “It has that sort of ethereal feel.”

They walked in silence for a few minutes, Draco taking in the halls that were not of marble.

Finally Lee spoke, “I’m glad you want to walk with me.”

They glanced at each other and then he felt Lee’s free hand nudge against his own as they walked. He gave Lee a curious look and then let out a sigh when Lee’s fingers laced with his own.

They walked this way in silence again, until they reached the beautiful garden that Lee had spoken of and Draco gasped.

They had entered a room, or what he thought would be a room. But beyond the door they were inside a dome. The ceiling was the sky, a perfect sky. There was grass beneath their feet.

“How is this… How is this possible? We’re indoors.” Draco muttered, “They must be the Gods.”

Lee let out a light laugh and shrugged. “You know, maybe they are. And soon we’ll be at our final destination, paradise, Norma Jeane says.”

“And then?” Draco asked, turning to face Lee.

Lee swallowed, his expression hopeful. It made Draco ache.

He took the coffee from Lee’s hand and moved to the marble bench next to them, placing both cups down before turning back to Lee.

“Would you continue to travel? Would you settle?”

Lee swallowed again and shrugged. Draco took his hands and held them to his chest.

“You say they could make a place for me, could they make one for you too? Could we, could we stay together? Explore this new life together? If you want to of course.” Draco asked gruffly. Not wanting to display the exact extent to which he was exposing his belly in this.

Lee’s mouth spread into a gentle smile. And for the first time in a long time for Draco, everything made perfect sense.

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